

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of treating cartilage damaged from a cartilagenous disorder comprising contacting the cartilage with an effective amount of an antagonist to IL-17 or LIF.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the IL-17 or LIF antagonist is an anti-IL-17 or anti-LIF antibody.
3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the cartilage is articular cartilage.
4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the cartilagenous disorder is a degenerative cartilagenous disorder.
5. The method of Claim 4, wherein the degenerative cartilagenous disorder is arthritis.
6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the arthritis is rheumatoid arthritis.
7. The method of Claim 4, wherein the degenerative cartilagenous disorder is osteoarthritis.
8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the cartilage is contained in a mammal and the effective amount is a therapeutically effective amount.
9. The method of Claim 8, wherein the antagonist to IL-17 or LIF is administered by direct injection into an afflicted cartilagenous region or joint.
10. The method of Claim 1 wherein the cartilagenous disorder results from injury.
11. The method of Claim 10 wherein the type of injury is a microdamage or blunt trauma, a chondral fracture, an osteochondral fracture or damage to meniscus, tendon or ligament.
12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the injury is the result of excessive mechanical stress or other biomechanical instability resulting from a sports injury or obesity.
13. The method of Claim 1, wherein the IL-17 or LIF antagonist further comprises a carrier, excipient or stabilizer.
14. The method of Claim 1 wherein the contacting is combined with a standard surgical technique.
15. The method of Claim 1 wherein the IL-17 or LIF antagonist is combined with an effective amount

of at least one ~~cartilage~~ agent.

16. The method of Claim 15 wherein the cartilage agent is selected from the group consisting of a peptide growth factor, a catabolism antagonist, an osteo-factor, a synovial factor and an anti-inflammatory factor.

17. The method of Claim 16 wherein the peptide growth factor is selected from the group consisting of IGFs, PDGF-AA, PDGF-AB, PDGF-BB, BMPs, FGFs, TGF- β s and EGF.

18. The method of Claim 16 wherein the catabolism antagonist is selected from the group consisting of IL-1ra, NO inhibitors, ICE inhibitors, agents which inhibit the activity of IL-6, IL-8, IFN- γ , TNF- α , tetracyclines and variants thereof, inhibitors of apoptosis, MMP inhibitors, aggrecanase inhibitors and inhibitors of serine and cysteine proteinases. **B**

19. The method of Claim 16 wherein the osteo-factor is selected from the group consisting of bisphosphonates and osteoprotegerin.

20. The method of Claim 16 wherein the anti-inflammatory factor is selected from the group consisting of anti-TNF- α , soluble TNF receptors, IL-1ra, soluble IL-1 receptors, IL-4, IL-10 and IL-13.

21. A method of preventing cartilage damage caused by a cartilagenous disorder comprising contacting the cartilage with an effective amount of an IL-17 or LIF antagonist.

22. The method of Claim 21 wherein the IL-17 and LIF antagonists are anti-IL-17 and anti-LIF antibodies.

23. The method of Claim 21, wherein the cartilage is articular cartilage.

24. The method of Claim 21, wherein the cartilagenous disorder is a degenerative cartilagenous disorder.

25. The method of Claim 24 wherein the degenerative cartilagenous disorder is arthritis.

26. The method of Claim 25 wherein the arthritis is rheumatoid arthritis.

27. The method of Claim 25 wherein the arthritis is osteoarthritis.

28. The method of Claim 21 wherein the effective amount is a therapeutically effective amount and

the cartilage is present in a mammal.

29. The method of Claim 28 wherein the IL-17 and LIF antagonist is administered by direct injection into an afflicted cartilagenous region or joint.

30. The method of Claim 21 wherein the cartilagenous disorder results from injury.

31. The method of Claim 30 wherein the type of injury is a microdamage or blunt trauma, a chondral fracture, an osteochondral fracture or damage to meniscus, tendon or ligament.

32. The method of Claim 30, wherein the injury is the result of excessive mechanical stress or other biomechanical instability resulting from a sports injury or obesity.

33. The method of Claim 21, wherein the effective amount of IL-17 or LIF antagonist further comprises a carrier, excipient or stabilizer.

34. The method of Claim 21, wherein the contacting is combined with a standard surgical technique.

35. The method of Claim 21, wherein the IL-17 or LIF antagonist is combined with an effective amount of at least one cartilage agent.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein the cartilage agent is selected from the group consisting of a peptide growth factor, a catabolism antagonist, an osteo-factor, a synovial factor and an anti-inflammatory factor.

37. A method of treating a mammal suffering from a cartilagenous disorder, comprising administering to said mammal a therapeutically effective amount of an antagonist to IL-17 or LIF.

38. The method of Claim 37, wherein the IL-17 and LIF antagonists are anti-IL-17 and anti-LIF antibodies.

39. The method of Claim 37, wherein the cartilagenous disorder is a degenerative cartilagenous disorder.

40. The method of Claim 39, wherein the degenerative cartilagenous disorder is arthritis.

41. A composition of matter comprising an effective amount of IL-17 and LIF antagonist.

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